

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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USIA-15 IGA-02 AID-20 IO-14 DRC-01 OMB-01 /129 W

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FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2998

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 DACCA 2097

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PINS, BG, PGOV

SUBJ: POLITICAL PRISONERS

REF: STATE 68545

SUMMARY: CITIZENS OF BANGLADESH HAVE LESS THAN PERFECT PROTECTION AGAINST BEING ARRESTED FOR THEIR POLITICAL BELIEFS AND ACTIONS. THE CONSTITUTION GUARANTEES BASIC FREEDOMS OF THOUGHT, SPEECH, ASSOCIATION, AND ASSEMBLY, BUT THESE ARE SUBJECT TO "REASONABLE RESTRICTIONS BY LAW" IN THE INTEREST OF STATE SECURITY, PUBLIC ORDER, AND OTHER REASONS. IN ADDITION TO RESTRICTIVE LAWS MAINTAINED FROM THE BRITISH AND PAKISTANI PERIOD, BDG HAS PASSED A SPECIAL POWERS ACT WHICH PROVIDES FOR PREVENTIVE DETENTION AND/OR PROSECUTION FOR A WIDE RANGE OF "PREJUDICIAL ACTS" THAT CAN ENCOMPASS MOST FORMS OF POLITICAL EXPRESSION IF THE GOVERNMENT SO INTERPRETS THE LAW. THE ACT PERMITS THE GOVERNMENT TO CENSOR AND CONTROL THE PRESS AND TO BAN ORGANIZATIONS. THE CASES OF POLITICAL DETENTION MOST OFTEN CITED BY THE OPPOSITION ARE REVIEWED IN THIS MESSAGE. UNDER THE LAW, CITIZENS OF BANGLADESH ARE SUBJECT TO ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION AND SOME ARE NOW IN JAIL FOR POLITICAL REASONS, PARTICULARLY THOSE CHARGED WITH COLLABORATION AND SEDITION. ANY CONSIDERATION OF REDUCING AID BECAUSE OF THE EXISTENCE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS WOULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE AND ADD TO THE INSTABILITY THAT ALREADY MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR A PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY TO FUNCTION IN BANGLADESH. END SUMMARY.

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1. BACKGROUND. BDG HAS RETAINED OR REVISED RESTRICTIVE POWERS THAT DATE FROM EITHER BRITISH OR PAKISTANI RULE. WITH INDEPENDENCE, THE RULING AWAMI LEAGUE ESTABLISHED A PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY, VOWING TO PERMIT A MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM AND DISAVOWING THE "BLACK LAWS" OF PAKISTAN WHICH HAD RESTRICTED ITS OWN POLITICAL ACTIVITY AND RESULTED IN FREQUENT DETENTION OF ITS LEADERS. THE BANGLADESH CONSTITUTION GUARANTEES BASIC FREEDOMS OF THOUGHT, SPEECH, ASSOCIATION AND ASSEMBLY, SUBJECT TO "ANY REASONABLE RESTRICTIONS BY LAW" IN THE INTERESTS OF STATE SECURITY, FRIENDLY FOREIGN RELATIONS, PUBLIC ORDER, DECENCY, OR MORALITY. COMMUNAL (RELIGIOUS) POLITICAL PARTIES ARE BANNED. PRIOR TO THE CONSTITUTION, BDG HAD ISSUED A NUMBER OF PRESIDENTIAL ORDERS, MANY STILL IN EFFECT, THAT CRITICS HAVE LABELED REPRESSIVE.

2. COLLABORATORS. IN THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE, OVER 40,000 WERE ARRESTED UNDER A PRESIDENT'S ORDER ON COLLABORATORS FOR OFFENSES RANGING FROM MURDER TO STANDING FOR SPECIAL PAKISTANI ELECTIONS IN 1971. THOUSANDS MORE WERE DECLARED ABSCONDERS AND THEIR PROPERTIES ATTACHED. THE TRIALS BY SPECIAL TRIBUNALS FOLLOWED LEGAL PROCEDURES BY SUMMARY PROCEEDINGS, INCLUDING DEFENSE COUNSEL. ACCORDING TO A DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE CONVICTION RATE DECLINED FROM 90 TO 50 PERCENT AS WITNESSES BECAME MORE DIFFICULT TO LOCATE; LESS THAN 5,000 WERE TRIED. WHETHER OR NOT BDG HAD THE RIGHT TO TRY PEOPLE UNDER AN EX POST FACTO LAW FOLLOWING A BITTER WAR IS A COMPLEX ISSUE AND PROBABLY NOT PERTINENT TO THE INTENT OF CONGRESS REGARDING POLITICAL PRISONERS AND US AID. OVER 35,000 WERE IN JAIL, MOSTLY UNTRIED, IN DECEMBER 1973 WHEN BDG GRANTED A GENERAL AMNESTY, EXCLUDING THOSE ACCUSED OF MURDER, RAPE, AND ARSON. WE SUSPECT NOT ALL HAVE BEEN RELEASED; SOME OF THE AMNESTIED CLAIM ONLY 8,000 HAVE BEEN FREED.

3. THE HIGHLY CONTROVERSIAL PRESIDENT'S ORDER 50 SET UP SPECIAL TRIBUNALS TO TRY SCHEDULED OFFENSES SUMMARILY. P.O. 50 DEALT WITH ESSENTIALLY OVERT ACTS, SUCH AS SABOTAGE, SMUGGLING, AND VIOLENT CRIMES, BUT IT ALSO INCLUDED SEDITION. AN ATTEMPT TO INCLUDE POLITICAL ACTIONS AS SERIOUS OFFENSES WAS THWARTED IN JULY 1973 BY A REVOLT WITHIN THE AWAMI LEAGUE BY MP'S WHO LABELED THE PROPOSAL A RECREATION OF "BLACK LAWS." THE REVOLT WAS SHORT LIVED; IN SEPTEMBER 1973, THE PARLIAMENT PASSED A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

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PROVIDING FOR PREVENTIVE DETENTION AND PRESIDENTIAL EMERGENCY POWERS. THE BDG DEFENDED THE AMENDMENT AS A CORRECTION OF AN OVERSIGHT IN THE ORIGINAL DRAFTING OF THE CONSTITUTION, ARGUING THAT ALL CONSTITUTIONS HAD SUCH PROVISIONS (DACCA A-72, 10/16/73).

4. SPECIAL POWERS ACT (SPA). IN FEBRUARY 1974, THE PARLIAMENT PASSED THE SPA WHICH ENABLED PREVENTIVE DETENTION AND INCLUDED MOST OF THE PROVISIONS OF P.O. 50. SPA GIVES BDG WIDE RANGING

POWERS TO DETAIN PEOPLE TO PREVENT "PREJUDICIAL ACTS," TO CENSOR AND CONTROL THE PRESS, TO PREVENT OR PUNISH PREJUDICIAL ACTS, AND TO BAN ORGANIZATIONS, POLITICAL AND OTHERWISE, FOR THE SAME REASON. PREJUDICIAL ACTS ARE DEFINED AS ANY ACTIONS WHICH ARE INTENDED OR LIKELY TO PREJUDICE (1) THE SOVEREIGNTY OR DEFENSE OF BD; (2) MAINTENANCE OF FRIENDLY FOREIGN RELATIONS; (3) SECURITY OF BD OR TO ENDANGER PUBLIC SAFETY OR MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ORDER; (4) TO CREATE OR EXCITE FEELINGS OF ENMITY OR HATRED BETWEEN DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES, CLASSES AND SECTIONS; (5) TO INTERFERE WITH, ENCOURAGE, OR INCITE INTERFERENCE WITH THE ADMINISTRATION OF LAW OR MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ORDER; (6) TO PREJUDICE MAINTENANCE OF ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES AND SERVICES; (7) TO CAUSE FEAR OR ALARM TO THE PUBLIC OR ANY SECTION OF IT; (8) TO PREJUDICE ECONOMIC OR FINANCIAL INTERESTS OF THE STATE. A PREJUDICIAL REPORT IS ANY REPORT, STATEMENT OR VISIBLE REPRESENTATION, TRUE OR FALSE, WHICH, OR THE PUBLICATION OF WHICH, IS A PREJUDICIAL ACT OR AN INCITEMENT TO COMMIT ONE. PREVENTIVE DETENTION ORDERS ARE ISSUED BY A MAGISTRATE AND REVIEWED BY A THREE MAN ADVISORY BOARD TO DETERMINE PROBABLE CAUSE. SPECIAL TRIBUNALS SUMMARILY TRY THE OFFENSES LISTED IN THE ACT AND OTHERS SPECIFIED. MOST OF THE OFFENSES PRECLUDE BAIL; THE RIGHT TO APPEAL THE ACTIONS OF THE TRIBUNALS AND DETAINING AUTHORITIES IS RESTRICTED TO APPEALING PRIOR CENSORSHIP RULINGS AND THE FINAL DECISIONS OF THE TRIBUNALS. THUS SPA PERMITS BDG IN MANY INSTANCES TO BYPASS THE COURTS AND AVOID JUDICIAL REVIEW BY AN ESSENTIALLY INDEPENDENT HIGHER COURT SYSTEM.

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ACTION NEA-16

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FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2999

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 DACCA 2097

5. SPECIFIC CASES. OPPOSITION PARTIES ACCUSE THE GOVERNMENT OF

POLITICAL REPRESSION AND UNJUSTIFIED IMPRISONMENT OF POLITICAL LEADERS. THE MORE EXAGGERATED CLAIMS ARE THAT THERE ARE FROM 25,000 TO 30,000 POLITICAL PRISONERS IN BANGLADESH (EQUAL TO WHAT A BDG OFFICIAL IN ANOTHER CONTEXT SAID IS THE ENTIRE PRISON POPULATION IN THE COUNTRY). WE TEND TO BELIEVE THAT MANY LOCAL LEADERS OF AT LEAST ONE OPPOSITION PARTY, THE JSD, WERE ROUNDED UP IN MARCH FOLLOWING A CONFLICT WITH SECURITY FORCES IN DACCA, BUT CONCRETE EVIDENCE IS LACKING. THEREFORE, OUR REVIEW IS LIMITED TO CASES FREQUENTLY CITED BY THE OPPOSITION AS EVIDENCE OF POLITICAL REPRESSION.

A. POLITICAL LEADERS. ON MARCH 18, NATIONAL SOCIALIST PARTY (JSD IN BENGALI) LEADERS MAJOR M. A. JALIL AND ABDUR RAB LED PROTESTORS TO THE RESIDENCE OF THE HOME MINISTER; AT LEAST 3 PEOPLE WERE KILLED AS A RESULT OF POLICE FIRING IN WHAT WAS TERMED SELF-DEFENSE. JALIL, RAB AND 24 OTHERS WERE ARRESTED. ON APRIL 17, A SUB-DIVISIONAL MAGISTRATE DENIED BAIL FOR RAB AND JALIL. THEY ARE ACCUSED OF RIOTING, TRESPASS, ATTEMPT TO MURDER, AND ALSO UNDER THE SPA. THEIR FOLLOWERS COMPLAIN THEY ARE BEING ILL-TREATED. ONE MEMBER OF THEIR PARTY WAS RELEASED ON BAIL.

B. THREE FORMER MUSLIM LEAGUE LEADERS--KHAN SABUR KHAN, KHAWJA KHAIRUDDIN, AND SHAFIQR RAHMAN--WHO HAD BEEN AMNESTIED AS COLLABORATORS IN DECEMBER, WERE REARRESTED APRIL 26 UNDER THE SPA FOR THEIR "ANTI-BANGLADESH ACTIVITIES." A HOME MINISTRY SPOKESMAN ACCUSED THEM OF REJECTING THE BENEVOLENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT WHICH GRANTED AMNESTY, ENGAGING IN ACTIVITIES AGAINST THE FUNDAMENTALS

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OF THE STATE, AND BEING UNABLE TO RECONCILE THEMSELVES TO THE CREATION OF BANGLADESH. THE SPECIFIC ACTIONS CITED ARE: HOLDING CLANDESTINE MEETINGS TO REGROUP THEIR FOLLOWERS; AND PUBLICLY DEMANDING COMPENSATION FOR PAKISTANI-ALLIED MILITIAMEN KILLED DURING THE WAR, RELEASE OF COLLABORATORS WHO "COMMITTED HEINOUS CRIMES," REINSTATEMENT OF PUBLIC SERVANTS DISMISSED FOR COLLABORATION, AND RESTORATION OF CITIZENSHIP TO THOSE WHO LEFT THE COUNTRY DURING THE WAR AND ARE NOW WORKING AGAINST BD. ACCORDING TO THE GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN, "SUCH ACTIVITIES ARE A DIRECT AFFRONT TO THE GREAT SACRIFICES MADE BY MILLIONS OF MARTYRS AND HEROISM AND SUFFERING OF THE PEOPLE FOR THE LIBERATION OF BD." BECAUSE OF SUCH "ANTI-BANGLADESH AND ANTI-PEOPLE ACTIVITIES," IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S "MORAL DUTY TO TAKE APPROPRIATE REMEDIAL ACTION TO CURB SUCH ACTIVITIES BY COLLABORATORS BEFORE THEY COULD GO TOO FAR." THESE MEN HAD BEEN ATTEMPTING TO FORM A REPUBLICAN PARTY BUT DENIED ANY PLAN TO RESURRECT MUSLIM COMMUNAL POLITICS. THEY HAVE CALLED FOR RELEASE OF ALL COLLABORATORS AND RESTORATION OF THEIR RIGHTS AND PROPERTIES IN THE SPIRIT OF THE RECONCILIATION EXISTING BETWEEN BANGLADESH AND PAKISTAN AS A RESULT OF THE NEW DELHI AGREEMENT AND DECISION NOT TO TRY PAKISTANI POW'S FOR WAR CRIMES.

C. MRS. ARUNA SEN, 60 YEARS OLD, WAS ARRESTED FEBRUARY 6 BY THE RAKKHI BAHINI (A SECURITY FORCE) ALONG WITH TWO YOUNG WOMEN. AFTER FEARS WERE EXPRESSED FOR MRS. SEN'S SAFETY, BDG ON FEBRUARY

27 ISSUED A PRESS NOTICE CONDEMNING THE EFFORT TO MALIGN THE RAKKHI BAHINI AND TO CREATE "DISSATISFACTION AND HATRED IN THE MINDS OF THE PEOPLE." MRS. SEN, "NOTED FOR HER ANTI-STATE ACTIVITIES," AND THE TWO YOUNG WOMEN WERE IN POLICE CUSTODY FOR "ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF ARMS." THE OPPOSITION CLAIMED THAT MRS. SEN WAS MISTREATED AND THE YOUNG WOMEN RAPED TO FORCE THEM TO REVEAL THE WHEREABOUTS OF MRS. SEN'S REVOLUTIONARY HUSBAND AND SON. A HABEAS CORPUS HEARING WAS HELD MARCH 18, FOR WHICH MRS. SEN WAS BROUGHT TO THE JUDGE'S CHAMBER RATHER THAN OPEN COURT BECAUSE OF PROSECUTION FEARS OF A PUBLIC DISTURBANCE. THE YOUNG WOMEN WERE RELEASED THAT DAY; MRS. SEN WAS RELEASED ON BAIL MARCH 23. ONE OF HER LAWYERS TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT MRS. SEN SHOWED VISIBLE EVIDENCE OF TORTURE.

D. TIPU BISWAS AND MD. ABDUL MATIN WERE BOTH LEADERS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF EAST BENGAL, A MAOIST GROUP BELIEVED TO BE INVOLVED IN TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF MATIN'S ARREST ARE UNKNOWN TO US BUT TIPU BISWAS WAS ARRESTED IN FEBRUARY 1973 WITH 6 OTHER MEMBERS OF HIS GROUP. THE PRESS REPORTED BISWAS CONFIDENTIAL

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WAS FOUND WITH A HUGE CACHE OF ILLEGAL WEAPONS. NO REPORT OF COURT APPEARANCES BY BISWAS NOR EFFORTS TO HAVE HIM BAILED HAVE APPEARED IN THE LOCAL PRESS.

6. EDITORS. THE BRITISH-ORIGINATED STATUTE DEFINES SEDITION THUS: "WHOEVER BY WORDS, EITHER SPOKEN OR WRITTEN, BRINGS OR ATTEMPTS TO BRING INTO HATRED OR CONTEMPT, OR EXCITES OR ATTEMPTS TO EXCITE DISAFFECTION TOWARD" THE GOVERNMENT. THREE OF THE MORE CELEBRATED CASES OF EDITORS ARRESTED FOR SEDITION FOLLOW:

A. FOIZUR RAHMAN WAS ARRESTED SEPTEMBER 6, 1972 AND HIS TWO WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS CLOSED. HE WAS RELEASED ON BAIL IN JANUARY, 1974. FOIZUR SAYS THAT HE WAS ARRESTED BECAUSE HE HAD SAID THAT BDG WAS SELLING-OUT THE COUNTRY TO THE INDIANS AND HAD URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO RESIGN IF THEY COULD NOT SOLVE THE COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS.

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ACTION NEA-16

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 DACCA 2097

D. THE EDITOR OF A SMALL BENGALI WEEKLY, BANGLAR MUKH, WAS ARRESTED FOR SPREADING RUMOR. TWO NEW ITEMS ARE THE PROBABLE CAUSE FOR HIS ARREST: ONE RUMOR THAT THE 100 TAKA NOTE WAS TO BE DEMONETIZED; THE OTHER THAT BANK ACCOUNTS LARGER THAN 500 TAKA WOULD BE FROZEN. BOTH REPORTS WERE DENIED BY THE GOVERNMENT. E. IN ADDITION, A YOUNG POET HAS BEEN ARRESTED BECAUSE HIS POEM, PUBLISHED IN A BENGALI NEWSPAPER, DISPARAGED CHRIST, MOHAMMED, AND BUDDHA AND CREATED A MINOR FUROR AMONG STRICT MUSLIMS. SPECIFIC CHARGES ARE NOT KNOWN. NO COURT HEARINGS HAVE BEEN HELD AS YET.

7. CONCLUSION. BANGLADESH LAW PROVIDES ITS CITIZENS WITH LESS THAN PERFECT PROTECTION AGAINST ARBITRARY ARREST FOR THEIR POLITICAL BELIEFS AND ACTIONS. SO BROAD IS THE DEFINITION OF SEDITION AND PREJUDICIAL ACTS THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS GREAT LEEWAY IN PREVENTIVELY ARRESTING OR BRINGING CHARGES AGAINST ITS CITIZENS. THUS IT HAS ARRESTED SOME EDITORS WHILE ALLOWING SIMILAR PUBLISHED STATEMENTS BY OTHERS TO GO UNCHALLENGED. IT HAS WATCHED CAREFULLY FOR SIGNS OF COMMUNALISM AMONG FORMER ISLAMIC POLITICAL LEADERS WHILE IGNORING VETERAN OPPOSITION LEADER MAULANA BHASHANT'S CREATION OF A RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION WHICH HE HAS USED ON OCCASION AS A POLITICAL FORUM.

8. IN THE CASES PRESENTED IN PARAGRAPHS 5 AND 6, BDG WOULD ARGUE THAT ALL ARE IN CLEAR VIOLATION OF THE LAW, EITHER FOR ILLEGAL ARMS, MURDER, RIOTING, OR FOR UNDERMINING THE GOVERNMENT AND JEOPARDIZING PUBLIC ORDER. TO US, THE ARRESTS, PARTICULARLY OF  
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EDITORS AND THE RIGHTIST POLITICIANS ARE PURELY POLITICAL IN NATURE. BENGALLEES IN POWER, HOWEVER, SEE IN CRITICISM OF THE GOVERNMENT AND ADVOCACY OF EXTREME ACTIONS A CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER TO THE STABILITY OF THE STATE. THE EVIDENCE LITTLE FAITH IN THE POLITICAL JUDGMENT OF THE ILLITERATE POPULACE AND FEAR THAT THE PEOPLE CAN BE LED INTO DISTURBANCES BY A FEW AGITATORS. AFTER ALL, THIS WAS WHAT THE AWAMI LEAGUE ITSELF DID FOR TWO DECADES.

9. IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT ONCE SOMEONE IS ARRESTED, IT IS DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO GAIN HIS FREEDOM. BANGLADESH COURTS DO NOT GRANT BAIL READILY IN ANY CASE AND THE SPA DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR BAIL. THOSE WHO HAVE NO LEGAL REPRESENTATION ASSUREDLY LANGUISH IN PRISON, BUT EVEN THOSE WITH ATTORNEYS FIND IT DIFFICULT DESPITE COURT APPEALS TO GAIN RELEASE FROM DETENTION.

10. WE BELIEVE THAT THE RULING PARTY IS DEALING AND WILL CONTINUE

TO DEAL HARSHLY WITH SOME OF ITS POLITICAL OPPONENTS WHENEVER IT FINDS THE OPPORTUNITY, BUT IT STILL PERMITS WIDESPREAD CRITICISM OF THE GOVERNMENT. THE OPPOSITION IS NOW CLAIMING THAT THE PRESENT USE OF THE MILITARY AND OTHER SECURITY FORCES TO ROUND UP ILLEGAL ARMS AND HALT SMUGGLING AND HOARDING (DACCA 1817, 1862) AND THE BAN ON PUBLIC GATHERINGS, DEMONSTRATIONS AND STRIKES WILL LEAD TO FURTHER POLITICAL REPRESSION. THE OPERATION APPEARS TO BE CARRYING OUT ITS STATED AIM. SO BAD IS LAW-AND-ORDER HERE AND SO RAMPANT IS CORRUPTION AND OTHER IRREGULARITIES THAT BDG DOES NOT NEED EXCUSES TO ARREST MANY PEOPLE AND THE SECURITY FORCES APPEAR TO BE USING THEIR ARREST POWERS FREELY.

11. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT POLITICAL PRISONERS ARE AN ISSUE WE CAN OR SHOULD BRING UP WITH BDG AT PRESENT. THE PRIME MINISTER PRIDES HIMSELF ON HAVING ESTABLISHED A DEMOCRACY. THE REACTION TO ANY APPROACH WOULD BE ANGER AT INTERFERENCE IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS AND AN AGGRIEVED PROTEST THAT THOSE DETAINED ARE GUILTY OF ENDNAGERING THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE STATE AND LAW AND ORDER. WE CAN CONTINUE IN LOW KEY WITH APPROPRIATE POLITICAL AND GOVERNMENTAL LEADERS TO STRESS OUR INTEREST IN BDG'S ESTABLISHMENT OF A PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY UNDER DIFFICULT ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS WHICH MIGHT TEMPT SOME TO CONSIDER A MORE AUTHORITARIAN COURSE.

12. WHAT MOTIVATES THE OPPOSITION'S VEHEMENT ATTACKS AND LIES AT  
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THE ROOT OF BDG'S FEAR THAT CRITICISM AND AGITATION WILL IGNITE PUBLIC DISTURBANCE IS THE MALAISE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY CAUSED BY A DEPRESSED AND STAGNANT ECONOMY. SHOULD CONDITIONS CONTINUE TO DETERIORATE, THE ONLY OUTCOME WILL BE EVEN GREATER CONTROLS ON CRITICISM AND AGITATION. WE CANNOT GUARANTEE THAT AN IMPROVED ECONOMY RESULTING IN PART FROM OUR ASSISTANCE WOULD LIBERALIZE THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARD ITS OPPONENTS. WE ARE CONVINCED, HOWEVER, THAT ECONOMIC CHAOS CAN ONLY LEAD TO FURTHER SUPPRESSION OF POLITICAL RIGHTS. ANY CONSIDERATION OF REDUCING AID BECAUSE OF THE EXISTENCE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS WOULD ONLY BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE AND ADD TO INSTABILITY THAT ALREADY MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR A PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY TO FUNCTION IN BANGLADESH.  
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## Message Attributes

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